

Theology 31.

A
R E V I E W

Of Mr. WHISTON'S

XXIII PROPOSITIONS

Concerning The

Primitive Faith of Christians

ABOUT THE

Trinity *and* Incarnation.

WITH

ALTERATIONS, DISTINCTIONS, and NOTES
thereupon; and upon his Table of Creeds; and
upon the Apostolical Constitutions.

With a Course of LETTERS To and From
Mr. *Whiston* leading and relating thereto.

By W. STAUNTON, late Clerk in Chancery.

Ἀντρεῖς Θεῶ, Δελαῶ Χρῖστῷ.

To which is Annexed,

A Treatise concerning *Reason* and *Revelation*.
Perused and Approved by Mr. WHISTON.

Be not conformed to this World; But be ye transformed by the Renewing
of your Minds, that ye may prove [i. e. by searching find out] what is
that good and acceptable and perfect Will of God, Rom. xii. 2. And
that God may not give you over to a Reprobate [or Injudicious] Mind,
Rom. i. 28. With a due Recompence of the Error, v. 27. even of
Idolatry, v. 25.

Nihil temere assero rem secum lector expendat.

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THE
PREFACE.

I N my Epistolary Conference with Dr. Waterland, I freely declared, That I took no Part with any of his Opponents; and that I thought, if there could be no other Scheme proposed than the Three by him mentioned in his Preface to his Sermons, the Arian, the Socinian, and the (Athanasian, which he there calls) Catholick, that of those Three, I thought the Latter ought to take Place, if no other could be proposed.

And I, therefore, proposed a Fourth; so that it is not of necessary Consequence, that one of his Three be the true one; for I do not see any Thing to the contrary, but that the Doctrine which I have inclined to, and inquired after, is truly Christian, Catholick and Apostolick; and the Athanasian Doctrine, seems to me not to be so.

And I am the rather prompted thus to think, because the many learned Athanasians, to whom I have, in a most humble and particular Manner, applied, for Advice and Satisfaction, in the disputed Points, have been dead silent therein; utterly neglecting and forbearing to give plain Answers, or any Answer indeed, to particular Questions: Which is an Argument to me, that they are inwardly and secretly convicted.

They argue freely, indeed, with the Arians, Socinians, Sabellians, Eusebians, and Papists; but they find, in each of these, manifest Errors; for they see each others Error, though they do not see their own; so they argue only ad homines, which, to me, that take no Part with either of them, is no Answer: But they may yet retrieve themselves, if they please, and can; for mine Ears are open, and I am still, as a Learner, listning after them,

The P R E F A C E.

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them, as spiritual Guides; and with an open and willing Mind, to embrace Truth.

And for the Discovery whereof, I also applied myself to the Reverend Mr. Whiston, and laid before him the Letters, which I wrote to Dr. Waterland: and he gave me great Encouragement to pursue my Enquiries, and was pleased to confer Personally with me, and to lay before me his Table of Creeds, and his Five Volumes of Primitive Christianity; the Second whereof, is intitled, The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles: and the Fourth, An Account of the Primitive Faith; which he has drawn up into Three and Twenty Articles, or Propositions: and several other Books, which I diligently perused, and was, in some Things, convinced by them, as will appear by the following Letters: But yet, far from consenting to his Three and Twenty Propositions.

And I, therefore, gave him to understand, that I had reviewed them, and had new modell'd them, according to my own Thoughts, with my Reasons under each Article; and that I was willing to lay them before him, which he readily embraced, with a solemn Promise, To give me his Unbiaſſed and Impartial Thoughts thereupon in Writing.

How

How he has performed that Promise, or, rather, that he has not performed it, will appear. And I thought it Equal and Just to publish this Conference also, as a Specimen of my Endeavours to make Trial of the Sincerity of the Eusebians; and to provoke them to speak out, in plain English, Whether there be more Gods than one, or not? And to that End, I have taken particular Notice herein, that Mr. Whiston's Quotation of Origen, doth not only convict the Athanasians, but himself also, and all Arians and Eusebians (and, I may say, all others) that pray to Christ as God, which is directly contrary to his own express Commandments, Mat. vi. John xvi. And it is also written, John iv. 23. The Hour cometh, and now is, saith our Saviour, when the true Worshipers shall worship the Father.

N. B. Upon the Closing of this Conference, and which is the Reason that it was not sooner published, it pleased God, that I languished, as in extremis, under a Dropsy and Asthma for a long Time, and, being given over by Friends and Physicians, I, at last, heard of the Fame of Dr. Dover, and of his great Skill in Physick, and of a Specifick for the Dropsy, which he only is Master of, as a Remedy unknown to the College of Physicians;
and

The P R E F A C E. vii

and by which, it hath pleased God, that he hath wrought a miraculous Cure upon me, to the Glory of God, and to his own immortal Honour; and which I, therefore, hereby declare; and not only for the Reasons aforesaid, but for the General Good of Mankind.

I add hereunto, That it hath pleased the Lord, who doth Great and Wondrous Things! Who is God alone! to shew this Token, for Good, upon me, that they who hate me (if any such there be) may see it, and be ashamed, because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me, Psal. lxxxvi. v. 10, 17.
παρεκάλεσας με, hast been my Paraclete.



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THE P. R. A. C. H.

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A
R E V I E W
O F
Mr. WHISTON's Propositions
Concerning the
Primitive Faith of Christians, &c.

A R T I C L E I.



HERE is but one Living,
Eternal, Infinite, Omnisci-
ent, Omnipotent, and Invi-
sible God; The Origin of all
Beings, and Supreme over
all: The Creator of all Creatures, The
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who
was the First-Born of every Creature.
Col. i. 15.

The Articles herein recited, are as they stand corrected by me,
B N. B.

[Embossed Seal]

N.B. **I**T seems more proper to say, God Supreme over all, than to say, Supreme God, lest that Phrase should infer an Inferiour God; it may be Two, as being the superlative Degree, But I *renounce* all Thoughts and Belief, either of *Ditheism*, *Tritheism*, or *Polytheism*; There is really but *one* God. And I observe, upon Mr. *Whiston's* Table of Creeds, That Jesus Christ is not called *God*, in the Original Creed, if that be so which is contained in the Apostolical Constitutions, which I *firmly believe*, whether it be Original or not; *only observing*, That the Article *ἐἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον* don't sound personally in the Greek, as in our Translation of it: It should be rendered rather Gust or Goust, than Ghost; See my Notes on Article XIX. Neither is Christ called *God*, in *Irenaeus* his Creeds, nor in Seven or Eight other of the Creeds, and particularly, not in the *Roman* Creed, which comes the nearest to, and is almost the very Words of what we call the Apostles Creed. It is indeed, in brief, the Constitution Creed, and contains and expresses the whole Substance of it: They are at least consistent, and in no manner contradictory to one another; I see no Difference in them but these, *viz.* The Constitution Creed believes Jesus Christ to be first-begotten of every Creature (according to St. Paul, Col. i. 15.) and that by him all Things were made. Which (although our Creed be silent therein) I also confess and *believe*, upon St. Paul's Authority, in manner as shall be here in after explained in my Notes upon Articles the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th. The Word *one* is also left

out of the First Article of the *Roman* and of our Baptifmal Creed; but I think it *imply'd* in both: And I am fure I now do, and I think that I fhall *always believe*, that there is but one God, and that even a ^a Prophet working Miracles will not be able to perfuade me out of it, in contradiction to the *Voice* of God, both by *Reason* and *Revelation*; Also our Saviour's Defcent into *Adms* is in our Creed, and not in the Conftitution Creed; and it may be the Word *descended* is improper, and *Adms* not well tranflated into *Engliſh*, and fo miſtaken by many as to the Senſe of it. I apprehend by it, "The State of Souls ſeparate from their Bodies, "whether in a good or bad State, whether "they be reſerved for Heaven or for Hell;" and that the Etymology of it is *inviſible*; and that although this Article came not into the Creed 'till after St. *Auguſtin's* Time, it may be yet the Word *Adms* is *Scriptural*. We find it both in the Old and New Teſtament, and it is applied to our Saviour, *Thou wilt not leave his Soul* ^{is} *Ad*, *Pſal. xvi. 10. Acts ii. 27, 31.* And it had the ſame Signification alſo among Jews and Heathens. And I alſo obſerve, That although Mr. *Whiſton* hath inserted and applied the Word God to Jeſus Chriſt in the firſt Creed of *Irenæus*, de Anno 170. yet it is not ſo applied by *Irenæus* in his Creed: There are indeed Words ſubſequent to the Creed, the laſt Words of which are, *Ad reſuſcitandam omnem Carnem humani generis*, and then it follows immediately, *Ut Jeſu Chriſto Domino noſtro, & Deo, & Salva-*

^a *Deut. xili. 1, 4.*

tori, & Regi, *secundum placitum Patris Invisibilis, omne genu curvet, &c.* Iren. Cap. ii. p. 45. And so it is rightly cited elsewhere by Mr. Whiston, and is in *English* thus; *To the Intent*, that every Knee should bow to Jesus Christ our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the Will or Pleasure of the Invisible Father. But it is manifest hereby, that this *Genu-flection* is not to be in Practice until *after* the General Resurrection, when he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead; and St. Paul assures us, *Acts* xvii. 31. That we are to be judged by the *Man* Christ Jesus, whom God hath *ordained*; So as God's *Vicegerent* sitting in Judgment upon us at the last Day, we are to *bow* the Knee to him; and I cannot but suppose, That *Ireneus's* Meaning in applying the Term or Character of God to Christ (*not* in his Creed, but in manner above mentioned) is the *same* as (and *no other* than) when we find it applied in sacred Writ, and by ^b God himself to Kings, Priests and Prophets, his Vicegerents here on Earth, and to whom also we bow the Knee. See the Notes on Article XVIII.



A R T I C L E II.

THIS one God is the ^c common Father of Angels and Men, and he ^d alone is to be worshipped and adored in

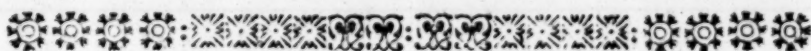
^b *Psal.* lxxxii. 7. ^c *Matt.* ii. 10. ^d *Matt.* iv. 10.

the full, and true, and proper Sense of the Words, and there being ^e none good but God, He only is the proper and immediate Object of such Divine Worship and Adoration: But yet this Worship and Adoration is to be paid to him by repenting Sinners (who are not otherwise worthy, but) in the ^f Name of Jesus Christ our Mediator.

N.B. **T**HERE being really but *one* God, and no other God by *Nature*, I say *not* that he is *primarily* to be worshipped, or that he is the Object of the *supreme Degree* of Divine Worship; because that *seems to imply* a secondary and inferior Degree of Divine Worship to be paid to some other God. Whereas, *re verâ*, *there is none* ^g other God but *one*: And the Commandment is, “*Him* ^h *only shalt thou serve.*” It is also written, “*He* ⁱ *only is good,*” and consequently *He only* is the Object of Love, which is the *internal Worship* of the Soul; and therefore say I, *Him only shalt thou love.* Which I take to be the true Sense and Import of the Commandment which says, ^k *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy Mind, and with all thy Might.* That is *with all thy Love*, which is the plain Import of the Words. But although God

^e *Matt. xix. 17. Mark x. 18. Luke xviii. 19.* ^f *Acts iv. 12. John xvi. 23.* ^g *Exod. xx. 3.* ^h *Matt. 4. 10.* ⁱ *Matt. xix. 17.* ^k *Deut vi. 5. Matt. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30.*

be *the only Object* of Divine ^l Worship, and of this Divine Love, to wit the Love of Concupiscence; for Evil Concupiscence, or ^m Covetousness is *Idolatry*, yet there is a *civil Worship*, and there is also a Love of *Benevolence* due to Creatures; but these are plainly distinguishable *in Kind* from the Worship and the Love of God. In Kind, I say, and *not* in Degree only, so as to need to be distinguished by the Words *Primarily*, or *Supreme*, which are only Distinctions of *Degrees* of the same Kind of Love and Worship; but no Creature is or can be entitled to any *Degree* of Divine Love or Worship, which is *all due to God only*.



A R T I C L E III.

JESUS CHRIST is the ⁿ first, the immediate and so the only, and the only begotten Son of God, from the ^o beginning or ever the Earth was; The first of all Rational Creatures, and his Name is called ^p *Logos*, or *Ratio*, Reason, or Wisdom. And being the ^q Holy one, *i. e.* the Saint of God, his ^r righteous Servant, is most peculiarly ^s beloved of God, is the ^t Angel of the Lord of Hosts, The

^l *Λατρεία*. ^m *Col. iii. 5.* ⁿ *Col. i. 15.* ^o *Prov. viii. 23.*
^p *Rev. xix. 13.* ^q *Acts iii. 14.* ^r *Isa. liii. 11.* ^s *Matt. iii. 17.*
^t *Mal. ii. 7.*

^a Angel of his Presence, The ^w Angel of his Great Council, The ^x Angel of the Covenant, The ^y Apostle of God, ^z A Prophet like unto *Moses*, The High Priest of God, The ^a Mediator and ^b Peace-maker between God and Man.

N.B. **I** Think the Distinctions of Made, Created and Begotten, are *Distinctions without a real Difference*; For they *do all* of them respectively import, that God is the *Origin* of all, and which *all admit*. Yet I observe, how Divines, who are Philosophically disposed, seek to *distinguish* them in their Disputations, *viz.* *Made*, as out of nothing; *Created*, as out of the Substance of God; and *Begotten*, as being the very Substance of God: But these are *neither* of them *Scriptural*; and the *First* of them *only is Philosophical*, or demonstrable; the other Two *are not so*, and are therefore *inconceivable*; and I readily agree with *Eusebius*, that it hath been from *unscriptural* Expressions, that almost all the Confusions and Disorders of the Church have arisen.

^u *Isaiah* lxiii. 9. ^w *Isaiah* ix. 6. (*vid.* lxx.) ^x *Matt.* iii. 1. ^y *Hebr.* iii. 1. ^z *Acts* iii. 22. ^a *1 Tim.* ii. 5. ^b *Heb.* ii. 17.

N.B. THAT *although I hereby admit, that the First Creature, being the Express Image of God, and the First of all reasonable Creatures, was called Logos, or Ratio, Reason, or Wisdom, and in whom and by whom all other reasonable Creatures were made (as is herein after explained upon Articles 5, 6, 7, 8.) and accordingly the Jews called all Angels^d Logoi, or Powers endued with Reason; Yet I do not hereby retract any thing that I have wrote in the Preface to my Letters to Dr. Waterland, touching the Philosophical Trinity of Wisdom, Power, and Good in God. For I do really believe it, as the Dictates of Reason, not contradicted by Revelation; and that Wisdom, viz. the^e Internal Wisdom of God, is not a Creature, but Eternal as God Himself is, and is the Object of all Minds. And I abide by my Paraphrase of the Five first Verses of St. John's Gospel, as supported therein by Mr. Norris (as to the Doctrine of Ideas) and because the^f Fourth Verse of that Gospel is not, I conceive, otherwise explicable or intelligible: What was Made, was in it Life; and that Life was the Light of Men. But I am hereby reduced to admit a Distinction of Begotten Wisdom and Unbegotten Wisdom; "Yet meaning by Wisdom in the First Phrase, a^g Person so called; "but in the other Phrase, Ipsa Sapientia, Wisdom itself, Ipsa Ratio, in which latter Sense "of the Word, Wisdom is Original and Eter-*

^d Le Clerc upon the First of John. * Λόγος Ἐνδίαθετος.
^f John i. 4. ^g Rev. xix. 13.

“nal, as God himself; and can’t be the Effect of God, who never was *Ἀλογος*,” so that the Distinction of *Begotten* and *Unbegotten* don’t make the Difference; for there is as great a Difference between a created Person called Wisdom, and Wisdom itself, as is possible to be conceived, even as is between Creator and Creature; so then this *Distinction* is neither more nor less, “Than that the Creator is “Unbegotten, and the Creature is Begotten.”

And, I think, the not heeding to the *several* Senses of the Words Wisdom, and Wisdom, is what hath caused the Disputes touching this Matter: Nay, I now even think (I say now, because formerly I did not so think) that *Solomon* in his Account of Wisdom, *Chap. viii.* does treat of it in *both* its Senses, *partly* as *Eternal Wisdom*, and *partly* as a *Creature* so called. And so *St. John* also, in the First Chapter of his Gospel, treats of the *Logos*, *viz.* In the Five first Verses as *Eternal Reason*, and in the other Part of that Chapter as a *Person* so called. In like Manner as *St. Matthew* in his Account of Christ’s coming to Judgment, *Chap. xxiv.* speaks of it, *partly* with Respect to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and *partly* with Respect to the Last and General Judgment, *whereof none but the Father only*^h *knew the Day and Hour*, which I formerly thought related to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

^h *Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32.*

ARTICLE IV.

ANd by the Appointment of God, even of his and our ^h God and ^h Father, is our ⁱ Lord, our ⁱ King, and our ^k Judge.

ARTICLES V, VI, VII, VIII.

HE is the immediate and ⁱ express Image of God, and in, and by him, all ^m Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Cherubims, Seraphims, Arch-Angels and Angels were made by God their Creator ; as proceeding *suo modo* from him, who was the *prima proles Dei* ; And were and are subordinate and subject unto him, He being made the ⁿ Heir of all Things.

N.B. “ **T**HE invisible Things of God may be clearly seen and understood by the “ visible Creation, ” *Rom. i. 20.* And having premised this ; I would crave Leave to say, by Way of Illustration and Explanation of my

^h *Eph. i. 2, 17.* ⁱ *Mat. xxviii. 18.* ^k *Acts xvii. 31.*
^l *Heb. i. 3.* ^m *Col. i. 15, 17.* ⁿ *Heb. i. 2.*

Meaning herein; That *Adam* was the first Man, the immediate, and so, *as Man*, the only begotten Son of God, and that God "who^o made all " Nations of Men of one Blood, " made him the *Beginning* of that Creation, and *in and by* him all other Men, who proceeded from him in a Course of *Nature* and *Generation*, appointed and established by the Almighty, who is thereby, most apparently and confessedly, the *Creator* of all Mankind; of every individual Man: For although every Man was not made by God *immediately* as *Adam* was, yet he is as truly, and as *really*, and as effectually made by God as *Adam* was. And although I was made *in and by Adam*, and am Lineally descended from him, as to my Body, yet I dare not say, that *Adam* was my Maker or Creator, either as *Sole-Efficient* or as *Co-Efficient* with God. And I think I don't detract from *Adam*, by saying, with Respect even to my Body, that God created me. In *like Manner*, if all Angels, Souls or rational Creatures are, in a peculiar Manner, by God's Appointment, and in Virtue of a Power created in the Πρωτόπλῳ, begotten, derived or proceeding from him, his Generation[?] (his Children, as it were, not his Creatures) although in an ineffable Manner utterly unknown to us; (P Who shall declare his Generation?) and as inconceivable, as to the *Manner* of it, as that "coming unto " Christ, and believing in Christ crucified, is " Meat indeed, and Drink indeed," *John vi.* whereby I apprehend, that it is, *suo modo*, in a

^o *Acts* xvii. 26. ^P *Isa.* liii. 8.

Spiritual Manner as really the *Means* of Spiritual and Eternal Life, even of the Life of Souls, as what we call Meat and Drink, is of the Life of Bodies; And as being born of the Spirit, *John* iii. 6. is answerable, *suo modo*, to being born of the Flesh; which, tho' we know not the Modus of it, yet is as *true*, as that the Wind blows, tho' "we neither see it, nor yet know whence it cometh or whither it goeth," *John* iii. 8. I say, ¹ *If this may be supposed* to be the Case, as it seems to me most *probable*, and very easy and intelligible, "Then God is still my Creator, even the Creator of my Soul, and of my Body; and without any other Efficient or Co-efficient." Which Terms are *unscriptural*, and the Product of Fancy and Imagination, in Want of better Ground to go upon. And I am hereby "under no Temptation of robbing God of the Honour and Attribute of Creator, but own Him my sole and only Creator, God and Father, as immediate Creator of the first Creature, both of Jesus Christ, the 'Αρχη of Angels and Spirits, and of Adam, the 'Αρχη of Flesh and Blood," and in and by them respectively of all other Angels and Men, the first of which respectively may, in great Propriety of Speech, be called "The Beginning of God's Ways," for his Works, for the Creation of Angels and Men, for the Inhabitation of Heaven and Earth. And why may we not as *easily* believe and apprehend *Angels*, as well as Men, to be of an *Automatous* Na-

¹ Nihil temere affero rem secum lector expendat.

² *Prov.* viii. 22.

ture, when all the *visible Inhabitants* of our visible Heaven, and Earth, and Waters, not only Men, but even Beasts, Fish and Fowl *are so*: And even the *Earth* itself is a lower Instance of this Method of Creation, and of the Power premised, wherewith God invests his Creatures, [†] *Ἀυτομάτῃ γὰρ ἡ γῆ καρποφορεῖ*, for the Earth brings forth Fruit of herself, and every Tree yieldeth Seed, and so do all Sorts of Corn, Grain and Grass, and even every Flower of the Field hath its own Seed, and every Seed its own Body; and it is observable, that God repented not of this *Method* of Creation; for at the Deluge, and the general Destruction thereby, he yet reserved one [†] Family, and of every Sort of Creatures, Male and Female, for the Replenishing of the Earth; and I believe I might go yet one Step farther, and say, That even this Earth was the *Spawn* or Product of a former, and that from a *Chaos*, it became an habitable Earth, *suâ sponte*, by a Course of Nature, and will, after the general Conflagration, arise again out of its own Ashes, and yet once more become ^u *Ὀικουμένην*, an habitable Earth, and at the same Time the Bodies also ^w of the Righteous shall arise out of their own Dust, for the Inhabitation thereof: I say all this, not in Derogation, but by way of Exaltation of the Almighty Power of God, and of his easy and unoperose Way of Creation; who still, in *making one* of any Sort of Creatures, *made all* of that Kind, *in and by that one*, even as he made “all

[†] Mark iv. 28. [†] Gen. vii. 1, 3. ^u Hebr. ii 5. ^w 2. Pet. iii. 13.

his God, and Father, and still ⁱ intercedes to him in Heaven, for his Church and People here on Earth.

ARTICLE XII.

HE also owned, that ^k all his Knowledge, Power, Authority, Revelations and Doctrine were derived from and given Him by the Father, and all the Miracles, Signs, and Wonders wrought in Proof and Approbation of Him and his Mission, were all done by God, *id est*, ^l God did them all by Him, and all that Christ did, was so done, as might ultimately tend to the Glory of his Father, *John* xv. 8.

ARTICLE XIII.

That this same Jesus Christ did, in the most Antient Times, properly speaking, descend from ^m Heaven, and appear at several Times, and in several Places, to the Patriarchs, acting wholly in the Name of God as his Deputy and Vicegerent in the World, ⁿ God's Righteous Servant.

ⁱ *Luke* xxii. 42. ^k *Heb.* vii. 25. ^l *John* vi. 38. *John* x. 18, 25. *John* xvii. ^l *Acts* ii. 22. ^m *John* vi. 38. ⁿ *Isaiah* liii. 11.

N. B. **I** Dare not say, either that Jesus Christ was God by Nature, or that he personated God; He was, indeed, the Angel of God's Presence, and He only visible: But tho' God himself were invisible, yet His ^a Voice might be heard, and was heard, I presume, whenever what was uttered imported to be so: And so it was, I dare be confident, when it was said, *I am*; and when it was said, *Thou shalt have no other God but me*. And so it was, and could be no otherwise, at our Saviour's Baptism, and ^b *Lo a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*: And again, *There came a Voice out of the Cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son; hear him*. Neither did he personate God in his Incarnation, but freely owned him as his God and Father, and seldom called himself by any other Name than the Son of Man; But yet the ^d Godhead dwelt in him bodily as the ^e Mercy Seat of God.



A R T I C L E XIV.

THis same Jesus Christ came, properly speaking, ^f down from Heaven, and was made Man, being by the ^g Holy Spirit of God, and by the Power

^a Psal. lxxviii. 33.

^b Mat. iii. 17.

^c Mat. xvii. 5.

^d Col. ii. 9.

^e Rom.

iii. 25.

^f John vi. 38.

^g Luke i. 35.

of the Highest, conceived in, and Born of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, and increased afterwards in ^a Wisdom and Stature like other Men.

N.B. **A** God by Nature cannot increase in Wisdom. The Wisdom of an Angel may be clouded and obscured by Flesh and Blood, 'till a proper Age; but I don't conceive, that the Wisdom of God, or of a God by Nature, can. <



ARTICLE XV.

Jesus Christ, who was called ^b *Logos* or *Ratio*, the ^c Πρωτότοκος of Angels, assumed an Human Body, or, in Scripture Language, was ^d made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us, being ^e like unto us in all Things, ^f Sin only excepted.

N.B. **T**hat if Jesus Christ be God, or a God by Nature, there will be a *Necessity* for the Supposition of his having assumed a human *Soul* as well as a *Body*; For, “God incarnate, without an human *Soul*, would be

^a Luke ii. 52. ^b Rev. xix. 13. ^c Col. i. 15. ^d John i. 14. ^e Hebr. ii. 17 ^f 1 Pet. ii. 22.

“ God only, and not a Man. ” And to carry the Argument farther ; “ With an human Soul, he would be both God and Man : ” But as the first created Angel, we need not suppose him to have assumed any other Soul ; For, “ a sinless Angel incarnate, is a Man, “ and like unto us, ” (who are sinful Angels incarnate ; so I think : See the Appendix to *Sincere Thoughts*, Sect. 9.) “ in all Things Sin only excepted. ” And, I humbly conceive, That there *can be no other* Proposition or Hypothesis, devised or conceived by the Wit of Man, consistent with *this Truth*, that hath been and is so freely acknowledged by all, viz. That *Jesus Christ is like unto Man in all Things, Sin only excepted ; for it became our High Priest to be made like unto his Brethren in all Things*, Heb. ii. 17. *Saving that he knew no Sin*, 1 Cor. v. 21. *And did no Sin ; neither was Guile found in his Mouth*, 1 Pet. ii. 22.



A R T I C L E XVI.

AND was liable to Temptations as we are, and was tempted and suffered for us, *Heb. ii. 18.*

N. B. **G**OD, or a God by Nature, can neither suffer nor be tempted, *James i. 13.* But the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through Sufferings, *Heb. ii. 10.* And for this End, “ To enable and to incline and
C 2 “ prompt

“ prompt him to be *Merciful*, and to make
 “ Reconciliation for the Sins of the People; ”
 for the Text says, *Ver. 18. In that he suffered
 and was tempted, He is able to succour them
 that are tempted.*



A R T I C L E XVII.

AND will, at the ^a Consummation of
 all Things, resign up that Kingdom
 which God instated Him in after His
 Resurrection, into his Father's Hands,
 and will thence-forward, with all other
 dependent Beings, be intirely subject to
 his Father for ever.

N. B. **A**S preliminary to the 18th Article,
 I observe, That Christ is not God,
 or a God by Nature, because I think it is ma-
 nifest that there *can be but one God* by Nature;
 and that the *Nature* of God is, *to be ex se*, uno-
 riginated and the *Origin* of all Things, so
 Christ cannot be God, no, not an inferior God,
 by Nature: Suppose him then God in an infe-
 rior Sense; *In what Sense* therefore he may
 be our God, or a God to us, is to be *inquired*.
 It is written, *Exod. vii. 1. And the Lord said
 unto Moses, See, I have made thee a God to Pha-*

^a 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

raoh, and Aaron thy Brother shall be thy Prophet: And again, Chap. iv. 16. Aaron shall be to thee [Moses] instead of a Mouth, viz. to deliver thy Commands to Pharaoh; and thou [Moses] shalt be to him [Aaron] instead of God, viz. to direct and enjoin him, what to say to Pharaoh. And all Kings, Priests and Prophets, as *Vicegerents* of God, have been called Gods, even by the sacred Scripture, and by God himself. *I have said* ^a *ye are Gods*. And in this Sense, there can be no Question, but that Jesus Christ our King, supreme over all (His God and Father only ^b excepted) the High Priest of God, the true Prophet of God, His immediate Vicegerent, *is God in this Sense*. And to whom, when he shall come in his ^c *Father's* Glory, and in *his own* Glory, and in the Glory of the Holy Angels, to put an End to this World, and to judge both Quick and Dead, every ^d *Knee shall bow*. But this Commandment of bowing the Knee to Him, particularly *respects* the Day of Judgment, although our Confessions of him, even *then*, will be no other, than what is ^e *now* required of us; to wit, that he is the *Messias*, the Anointed, the Christ of God, ^f *Ὁν κύει ὁ Ἰεσῦς Χεῖς*, not that he is God or a God by Nature; but yet, in the meantime, we are commanded both by God and Christ, to ^g *worship God only*, to direct our Prayers to the ^h *Father*, in his ⁱ *Son's* Name, as our Mediator and

^a *Psal.* lxxxii. 6. ^b *1 Cor.* xv. 27. ^c *Luke* ix. 26.
^d *Rom.* 14. 11. *Phil.* ii. 10, ^e *John* xx. 31. ^f *Mat.*
 iv. 10. ^g *Luke* xi. 2. *Mat.* vi. 9. ^h *John* xvi. 23,
 26.

Advocate. *And there is no other ^a Name under Heaven, whereby a Man may be saved. And therefore,*

A R T I C L E XVIII.

ALL supereminent Honour, and whatever is short of divine ^b Worship, (which is God Almighty's ^c Peculiar) is due to the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord and Master; and we do him this Honour by acknowledging him to be the Messias, by being baptized into his Name as such, and by obeying him in all Things, and by wishing or praying for the Grace and Peace of God, which we have in and through Him, and from and by Him, and by His Mediation and Intercession, Death and Sufferings: And by occasional Doxologies, and a truly and continued thankful Remembrance of his Death and Passion; But divine ^d Worship, Adoration, and ^e Invocation are due to God only, even the Father; and cannot be paid to Christ, without Breach of the Commandments. Yet, in Honour of him, we are to pray to God in his ^f Name, and for his Sake, and by or through Him; and which is, indeed, a supereminent Honour due to Him, and

^a Acts iv. 12. ^b λατρεία. ^c Mat. iv. 10. ^d Luke
xi. 2. ^e Mat. vi. 9. ^e Mat. iv. 10. ^f John xvi. 23, 26.
paid

paid and payable in Virtue of his own
^a Commandments, and is the highest
 Honour that we can pay to Him.

N.B. **T**He Grace of God, which brings Salvation in and by our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Peace which we have with God, by the Intercession of our Reconciler and Peacemaker (who is ^b thereby also worthy of the Name of the Son of God) is as properly, and, by such like Turn or Use of Speech, called, The Grace or Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as our Faith in Him is called, *The ^c Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ*. I also suppose, that this Honour given to Christ in Prayer to God, is all that can be allowed for *Origen's abusive precandi modus* (in his fifth Book against *Celsus*, Page 233. as quoted by Mr. *Whiston*), for notwithstanding this his *Catachresis*, he insists elsewhere as *fully* upon directing our Prayers to God, and *not* to Christ, as I do; and grounds his Opinion upon the *same Texts* of Scripture, and upon the *true and proper* Sense of the Word *Prayer*.

See what he says *De Orat.* Pag. 46, 53. (as quoted by Mr. *Whiston*) But if we understand, says he, what Prayer is; namely, (by his own Definition just before) *Petitions joined with Doxologies, concerning great Affairs, put up with great Earnestness by a Person in Danger*; Care must be taken, that no begotten Being be the Object of Prayer; no not Christ himself, but only the God and Father of the Universe; to whom also

^a *John* xvi. 23; 26.

^b *Mat.* v. 9.

^c *Rom.* iii. 22.

our Saviour *himself* prayed, as we have before expounded, and as he *teaches* us to pray : For, when one said to him, Teach us to pray ; he does *not teach us to pray to himself, but to his Father*, saying, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, and the rest that follows ; for if, as we have elsewhere *demonstrated*, the Son be different as to his Essence from the Father, and subject to him, we must either pray to the Son, and not to the Father, or to both, or to the Father alone. Now, to pray to the Son, and not to the Father, every body will own to be *most absurd* : Nay, I will venture to say, it will be *without Effect*. But if it be supposed, that we must pray to both, and that accordingly we may offer our Petitions in the plural Number, Do Ye afford, and, Do Ye bestow Benefits, and, Do Ye grant, and, Do Ye save : and if there be any parallel Forms to be used in Prayers, those do thence appear to be *unlike Christian Addresses*. Nor can any one shew such *Language* in the Scripture, as spoken by any. We must say therefore, That Prayer is to be made *to God alone, the Father of the Universe* ; but not *without* that High-priest, who was *ordained* such, with an Oath by the Father, and of whom it is said, *He sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedeck*. The Saints therefore return Thanks in their Prayers *to God, through Christ Jesus*, acknowledging his Mercies. But then as he that is careful how he prays, ought not to pray *to Him, who himself prays*, but to Him whom our Lord Jesus taught us to call *Father* ; so *without Him* are we not to offer any Prayer to the Father, as himself shews plainly, when
he

he says thus, *Verily, verily I say unto you, If ye ask my Father any Thing, He will give it you in my Name : Ask and ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full* : For he did not say, *Ask me*, nor ask the Father simply ; but, *If ye ask the Father any Thing, he will give it you in my Name* ; For until Jesus taught them this, no one had asked the Father in the Son's Name ; and that was true which was said by Jesus, *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name* ; and that also is true, *Ask, and ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full*. But if any one, supposing that he ought to pray to Christ himself, and confounding himself with that Passage that signifies Adoration to him, *Let all the Angels of God adore him* ; which is, without Controversy, spoken of Christ in * *Deuteronomy* ; we must say to him, That the *Church of Jerusalem* is named by the Prophet, as one that is to be adored by Kings and Queens, who should be nursing Fathers and nursing Mothers to her—Why do we not rather follow him that said, *Why callest thou me Good ? there is none Good but one, that is God, even the Father* ; as supposing him to say, If any one would pray to me, he ought to pray to the *Father alone, to whom I my self do also pray*. Which Rule do you learn from the Holy Scriptures. For we are *not to pray to that High Priest, who is ordained for us by the Father, and who has received of the Father to be our Advocate ; but to pray through him, as our High Priest and Advocate*.

* I find it not in *Deuteronomy*, but only in *Psal. xcvi. 7. Worship him [the Lord that reigneth, Ver. 1.] all ye Gods [the Kings his Vicegerents.]*

I farther add to Consideration, That if Christ were God, or an inferior God by Nature, it might be argued, That he would be intitled to Divine Worship, or to some Degree of Divine Worship, and the Argument would hold good too, for ought I know, *if Matters were at large*; and if we were not *strictly* bound by *Commandment*, both of God and Christ, to direct our Prayers to the *Father only* in the Son's Name: Which makes a mighty Difference, and will be, I think, too *Powerful* for the Argument, both against the *Athanasians* and *Eusebians*, even upon their own several *Hypotheses*; especially if it be Idolatry to worship so as God hath *not* commanded, *Deut. xvii. 2, 3.* or as it was in the Case of *Saul*, *1 Sam. xv.* in which Case, the very *Intention* of offering Sacrifice to God himself in a *Manner* not directed by him, is *adjudged Idolatry*.

And it is farther to be observed, That although the *Eusebians*, and even *Origen* himself, upon a Notion of Christ being God, do hold, that some Sort of Prayer is to be made to him, yet they *know not well what*: *Origen* calls it, *abusive* Prayer, as above, but yet he holds, that Prayer, *properly speaking*, is to be directed to God only, and *not* to Jesus Christ; and they *all own*, and the Apostolical Constitutions often declare, That there is *but one God, one true and only God*; yet they preach Jesus Christ as *our God*: Is Jesus Christ God, but not true God? Or is not the true God our God? So that they seem inconsistent with themselves, if they believe Jesus Christ to be God by Nature, or God in any other Sense, than as God's Vicegerent. And if *formal* Prayer ought not to be made

made to him, then surely that *long and formal* Prayer, in the Eighth Book of the *Constitutions*, ought not to be made and offered up to him, it being at least as *formal*, and more than *three times* as long as the Lord's Prayer; and many Scripture Expressions are thereby attributed to Christ, which appear, by Scripture, to be the *peculiar and proper* Attributes of God himself, even the Creator, the *Unbegotten* God, and are so attributed by the Texts referred to, and are not attributable to a Creature, no, not to the First of Creatures. The Prayer follows.

THOU who hast bound the Strong Man, and spoiled all that was in his House! Who hast given us Power over Serpents and Scorpions to tread upon them, and upon all the Power of the Enemy! Who hast delivered the Serpent, that Murderer of Men, bound to us, as a Sparrow to Children! Whom all Things dread, and tremble before the Face of thy Power! Who hast cast him down as a Lightning from Heaven to Earth, not with a Fall from a Place, but from Honour to Dishonour, on account of his voluntary Evil Disposition! Whose Look dries the Abysses, and Threatning melts the Mountains, and whose Truth remains for Ever! Whom the Infants praise, and sucking Babes bless! Whom Angels sing Hymns to and adore! Who lookest upon the Earth, and makest it tremble! Who touchest the Mountains, and they smoke! Who threatnest the Sea, and driest it up, and makest all its Rivers as Desarts,

and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet ! Who walkest upon the Sea as upon the firm Ground ! Thou only begotten God, the Son of the Great Father, Rebuke these wicked Spirits, and deliver the Works of thy Hands from the Power of the adverse Spirit ; For to Thee is due Glory, Honour and Worship, and by Thee to thy Father, in the Holy Spirit, for Ever. Amen.

Now if this be not a *formal* Prayer, in all Propriety of Speech, I desire to be informed what is: But notwithstanding all this, I am in some measure persuaded by Mr. *Whiston's* internal Evidences or Arguments, that there was something, very like these Constitutions in Form, wrote, it may be by the Apostles, or by some very Primitive Disciples, containing a Digest of Laws for the Government of the Christian Church; though I don't clearly see the Reasons of its Concealment; or if it were reasonable as they relate to Church Government, yet what may be said for it as they concern the Laity, and contain practical Religion or the common Rule of Faith? And what *Alterations* they may have undergone, even while they lay concealed for 400 Years, I am not able to judge. I don't hear that any *Original* was produced or did last so long; and if they were *privately* transcribed, who can tell what Alterations were made in them under the Cover of Privacy? Nor can I persuade my-self to take them by the *Lump* as they now come forth, either as not altogether consistent with the Gospel revealed and published, or not proved by it; yet in many Matters they refer to our Gospel-Proofs; but

but I dare not take them as a *Proof* of any other Gospel than what was at once delivered to the Saints; and I should be of this Mind, although I were persuaded, that no Alterations were made in them since the *Fourth* Century; But yet it is plain there has (although they seem in a manner to have been utterly rejected by all); for it is *admitted* by Mr. *Whiston*, that there are some Errors therein, and One or Two of them *so gross*, as not fit to be translated; but as to the Form of Church Government, I think, that even the primitive Practice, without a written Law, may be of sufficient Authority.

And as to the Phrases and Distinctions therein of an Unmade and Unbegotten God, and of a Made and Begotten God; the same is to be said as is before said, touching Begotten Wisdom and Unbegotten Wisdom, upon Article III. For the true and whole *Difference* is in the *Terms* God and God; in one Phrase our *real God* is meant and intended, in the true and proper Sense of the Word; but in the other Phrase, *God* signifies only *God's Vicegerent*: It is true indeed, that God is Unbegotten, and that his Vicegerent is Begotten by him; but so the *Words* themselves, being *rightly stated* and understood, import, without the Addition of the Epithets, and the *not observing*, or not apprehending the *Difference* of the *Terms*, God and God, Wisdom and Wisdom, *creates* Confusions and Disputes, which may be carried on 'till Doom's day, and No-body ever the wiser, while the Disputants neither understand themselves nor one another, nor talk *ad Idem*.



ARTICLE XIX.

THE ^a Holy Spirit of God knows the Things of God, as the Spirit of Man knows the Things of Man: And God himself, by the Communication of his ^b Spirit, is the ^c Inspirer of the Prophets and Apostles, the ^d Worker of Miracles, the ^e Comforter of the Church, the ^f Author of Sanctification to all good Men, and the Principal ^g Witness to our Blessed Saviour.

N. B. **I**T is written, *John iii. and Verse 3. Unless a Man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God; and, Verse the 6th, That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit; and, Ver. 8. Τὸ πνεῦμα The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest, Τὴν φωνὴν, the Voice thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born, ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος, of the Spirit, i. e. of the Breath, or Voice of the Wind or Spirit of God: 'Tis also written,*

^a 1 Cor. ii. 10. ^b 2 Pet. i. 21. ^c 2 Tim. iii. 16. ^d Acts ii. 22. ^e 2 Cor. i. 3. Ὁ πατήρ — Θεὸς πάντων παρακλήσεως. ^f Jude i. ^g Acts ii. 22.

*Acts ii. 2. And suddenly there came a Sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty Wind, πύων, and it filled all the House where they were sitting: And ver. 3. There appeared unto them Cloven Tongues as of Fire, i. e. like Flames of Fire, which are in Appearance cloven, or cleft, or divided Tongues, lapping, as it were, and falling up and down, and it sat upon each of them; and ver. 4. They were all filled, πνεύματος, with this Holy Wind, or Gouft, or Breeze of God upon them: And being thus influenced, inspired, and inlightned, or ^a taught of God, they began to speak with other Tongues, as this Holy Breeze, this Wind or Spirit, τὸ πνεῦμα, this Holy and Divine Afflatus, gave them utterance: For it is written, ver. 16, 17. And this is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last Days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy; And ver. 18. On my Servants, and on my Handmaids, I shall pour out in those Days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. Let us now see the Prophecy itself, Joel ii. 28. And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy: Thus it is foretold, Thus it is fulfilled: This as to Prophecy. Now as to Miracles; It is also written, *Acts ii. 22. Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God, by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs, which God did by Him.* These are the Words of St. Peter, and Part of*

^a *Isaiah liv. 13. John vi. 45. 1 Thess. iv. 9. Jer. xxxi. 33. 34.*

his very *First* Sermon, preached at the *first* Opening of the Christian Church, and is therefore, beyond Question, *Primitive*; and here he declares, in a most *Solemn* and *Publick* Manner, to *Thousands* of Hearers, “ That Jesus Christ “ was a Man, and that he was proved or ap- “ proved of God;” But how? ^a *By Miracles, Wonders, and Signs, which God did by Him.* Now if the Miracles wrought as by our Saviour himself, were yet done by God, then surely so were all other Miracles, which were yet seemingly wrought by the Apostles and Disciples of Christ, who were all of them, by like Holy Inspiration and Illumination, Sanctified and Comforted; for they all spake by the same Spirit, in Testimony of Christ our Saviour; by whose Mediation, after his Ascension, the same Spirit of God was sent and came, and poured out upon them like Water; as when God sends Rain, the Rain descends, and the Floods come, and the Wind blows, “ The ^{φωνὴ τοῦ πνεύματος} Voice of the Wind proceeds out of its Treasures; and so God speaks “ to us by his πνεῦμα, Wind or Spirit, and by “ his inspired Prophets, and by the Holy Pen- “ men of the Gospel, upon whom he pours “ out his Spirit like Water,” as aforesaid, and as is also foretold *Isaiah* xliv. 3. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Off-spring, viz. ver. 2. Upon the Seed and Off-spring of God’s Elect;* And thus are the thirsty Souls of Saints

^a Acts ii. 22.

refreshed or comforted, as by Water; and those that sit in Darknefs and in the Shadow of Death *illuminated* as by Fire, and *inspired* by God's Holy *Flatus*. And *thus* the Spirit of God, in Holy Writ, is assimilated to *Wind*, to *Fire*, and to *Water*, which yet are neither of them Persons; *Thus* was the Gospel at once delivered to the Saints: But the Learned say, That what is proper and peculiar to a Person, is also sometimes attributed to the Spirit of God: And well it may; for the Spirit of God sometimes signifies God himself, as in the Words before us, 1 Cor. ii. 10. However, there are many *Prosopopæia*'s in Scripture and Personal Properties, *such as* being sent, and coming, and having a Voice, and speaking as Persons do, and such like, are thereby frequently attributed, even to Inanimates, as particularly, ^a *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy-work: One Day telleth another, and one Night certifieth another: There is neither Speech nor Language, but their Voices are heard among them: Their Sound is gone out into all Lands, and their Words into the Ends of the World.* Can any thing be more personally described? And yet neither the Heavens, nor the Firmament, nor the Day, nor the Night are Persons, notwithstanding that they are in this *lively* Manner *represented*, as *personally* talking, and familiarly conferring with one another, and *conversing* with all Nations, and speaking *all* Languages. So likewise, *Sin* and *Corruption* are represented under

^a *Psal.* xix. 1 — 4.

the *Personal Characters* of Masters, and Wrath as a Father; and accordingly we are said to be “^a Servants to Sin, and the ^b Children of Wrath, and in ^c Bondage to Corruption; and so also ^d Charity envieth not, seeketh not her own, &c.”



ARTICLE XX.

GOD is a ^e Spirit, and the ^f Spirit of God is God, as the Spirit of Man is Man; and God is solely and properly intitled to Divine Worship, Adoration, and Invocation, and the true ^g Worshipers shall worship the Father.

ARTICLE XXI.

WE are Baptized into the Acknowledgment, Obedience and Direction of God, as the Universal Father; and of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the Messiah and Mediator, sent to di-

^a *John* viii. 34. ^b *Eph.* ii. 3. ^c *Rom.* viii. 21.
^d *1 Cor.* xiii. ^e *John* iv. 24. ^f *1 Cor.* ii. 10. ^g *John* iv. 23.

rect us in the true Way to Heaven; and of that Spiration, or Inspiration of God, by which he excites us to Good, and enables us therein.

N.B. **T**HESE are the Words of the very Learned and Ingenious Mr. *Stephen Nye*, late Rector of *Little-Hormead* in *Hertford-shire*, who studied this Point long, and was a great Master of it. See his several Books wrote in Explication of the Unity, and of the Trinity. Also see my Notes on Article XIX. And the Collect for our Communion-Service.



ARTICLE XXII.

GOD, the Universal Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, are Beings, or Persons really and numerically distinct from each other.

ARTICLE XXIII.

AND as the Spirit of God is God, so the Son of God, and all other Spirits, are intimately united to God, even

the Father ; Who is the Place of Spirits ; Who are all vastly inferior to God, and dependent upon Him, and exist in Him ; for to be totally separated or disunited from God, is to be separated and disunited from Being itself ; or, in other Words, is to be annihilated, or rather not to be.

ALL due Honour, Power, and Glory, be given and ascribed respectively, to the one Eternal God, and to his Son Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate, Now and for Evermore, in and by the Aid and Assistance of God's Holy Spirit.
Amen.

LET us also continually offer up our Prayers to God, in the Name of, and by, and through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; and in and by the powerful Efficacy of the most Holy Spirit of God ; Evermore praying for his Holy Inspiration and Illumination.

Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us. *Amen.*

The COLLECT *for the Communion-*
Service.

ALmighty God, unto whom all Hearts
be open, all Desires known, and
from whom no Secrets are hid, Cleanse
the Thoughts of our Hearts, by the *Inspira-*
tion of thy Holy Spirit, that we may per-
fectly love *thee*, and worthily magnify
thy Holy Name, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



/ 3



LETTERS

TO and FROM

Mr. WHISTON,

Relating to the foregoing

PROPOSITIONS.

LETTER I

Reverend Sir,



N Reading your Letter to my Lord *Nottingham*, and his Answer, and your Reply; It seems to me, That the only Question between you is, What the Fathers thought and taught touching our Saviour, and his Divinity. You say, The Primitive Fathers taught

D 4

other

otherwise than *Athanasius* and his Followers. Now, taking that for granted, I should think it reasonable (upon this Supposition, that the First Writers have said what their Successors could not come into, as to the Doctrine of a Superior and Inferior God : As not having, it may be, in their Opinions, Force enough, either Scriptural or Rational, to convince ; So also, it may be, the Devices and Imaginations of the succeeding Fathers were as Unscriptural and Irrational as the former, although they have since generally obtained, in Virtue of the Weight and Authority of Councils and Great Men) : I should therefore think it reasonable to *suspend* both, and not to chime in with either of them ; but to hold our own Judgments in Suspence, and to have immediate Recourse to the Scriptures, and let the Word of God be *considered* by our-selves as wrote to us, as well as to them, and so to endeavour a right Understanding thereof, by thinking for our-selves. And thus I have done as well as I can, being illiterate ; and the only Difficulty, which I apprehend from you, is the Belief of a *created* God, as the Principle of the earliest Age of the Church, which, with all other Difficulties arising on the Part of the *Athanasians*, seems to me to be intirely *removed* by the Doctrines of

of Idea's and Pre-existence : And that all Texts of Scripture, on all Sides, thereby receive a *natural* and easy Sense and Explanation, and confirm a Scheme which I have proposed, and which I take to be consistent with common Sense (at least according to my Lord *Nottingham's* Desire Page 8.) and therefore shall presume to send him also a Copy of it, as it is contained in the * Inclosed. You will see to whom and upon what Occasion they were wrote : And being by way of *Inquisition*, I humbly crave your Perusal and Thoughts thereupon, if you are so disposed, especially to the Three or Four Principal Questions therein put : I ask not an elaborate Discourse, but a short and friendly Account of your Sense thereupon, as between Christians, and in Aid of one that is weak and unlearned. Which, if you shall vouchsafe, I shall gratefully acknowledge your Favours herein. *I am,*

Reverend Sir,

Hampton Town
in *Middlesex*,
29 Sept. 1721.

With great Deference and
Submission,

Your Unworthy Humble Servant,

WM. STAUNTON.

* See, The Packet of Letters to Dr. *Waterland*.



LETTER II.

Cross-Street, Hatton-Garden,
Nov. 6. 1721.

S I R,

I Did not receive your Letter and Book 'till last *Saturday*: I heartily thank you for them: I am exceeding glad to meet with so good a *Christian*, so thoughtful a *Reasoner*, and so religious a *Man*, engaged in this Momentous Enquiry; but cannot but pity you, when I see you sometimes labouring to strike out new Senses of antient Expressions in Scripture, while there are so many Originals remaining of that and the next Age, which evidently shew, that those were not the real Meanings of the Writers; and that then those Expressions were not so understood. It would be Endless for me to go into such a Debate with you by Letter as you entred into with Dr. *Waterland*: Nor will my other Studies, or constant Method in the like Cases, admit of so large a Portion of my Time, as I perceive that Debate would amount to; but if you would please to call at my House, and spend

spend some Hours with me upon that Subject, you should be very welcome; nor would I grudge you any Light that I could give you, in a Point which I have long since fully satisfied my-self about, and do not think it so much as doubtful, if Men would but leave their later Fancies and Schemes, and submit themselves to the plain Accounts we have from the Writers of the *New Testament*, and the rest of their Disciples and Contemporaries, both of the Doctrines and Worship, and Discipline which was delivered from Christ to his Church.

I am, Sir,

Your hearty Well-wisher

and Servant,

WILL. WHISTON.

LET.



LETTER III.

Reverend Sir,

I Received your very obliging Letter. Your kind Invitation and Readiness to instruct me, is very engaging; and is the most, it may be, that ought to have been asked. But it was Doctor *Waterland's* own Proposal to correspond by Letter; and that Method much approved by his Preface. Which, and my Inability by Asthmatical Indispositions to live in *London* Air (no, not for a Day, and sometimes not an Hour) have led me, it may be, beyond the Bounds of Modesty, in desiring it of you and others; But yet I have been always careful to submit to every one's own good Will and Leisure (but I find no-body at Leisure as yet); only I have *claimed* it of Doctor *Waterland* as a *due Debt* by Promise.

I add only, my humble Thanks to you for your good Opinion of me; and that I have Hopes of being able to wait upon you in or about *April* or *May* next, and shall

shall rest with Patience in the mean
Time. Praying a Continuation of your
Friendship, am, Sir,

Hampton Town,
in Middlesex,
9 Nov. 1721.

Your much obliged Servant,

W. STAUNTON.



LETTER IV.

S I R,

Novemb. — 1721.

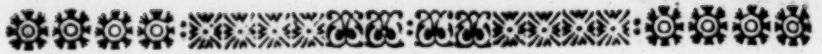
Since I find by your Second Letter,
that your Health will not permit
you to come to *London*, but will permit
you to come to *Kensington*, I am very
ready to comply with you; and if you
please to appoint any Day and Place,
when and where I may meet with you
there, I will endeavour to meet you.
It must be as soon in the Morning as
may be; otherwise, we shall have but
little Time for our Conversation. I am,

S I R,

Your sincere Friend and Servant,

W. WHISTON.

LET-



LETTER V.

Worthy Sir,

YOur kind Offer of meeting me at *Kensington*, is yet more Obliging; But, because I have an easier Passage by Water to *Chelsea*, I should rather meet you there at Mr. *Larchin's*, a Barber, just by the Ferry, on *Thursday* next, at your own Hour, in the Morning: I propose to be ready for you by Eight. Your Readiness to serve, and the Relish you seem to have of me, prompt me, at the Hazard of my Reputation, to lay before you also, a small Treatise of *Reason and Revelation*; and on Reading of it, you will be pleased to draw a Line with your Pen under every Thing that you dislike therein. I also send the Two Sermons which occasioned the Writing of it, lest you should not have them by you; and you will be pleased to bring them with you, that we may also talk this over at the same Time; and I beseech you, Sir, to take a Coach at my Charge.

Your most Humble Servant,

17 Nov. 1721.

W. STAUNTON.

LET-



LETTER VI.

Reverend Sir,

THERE is nothing that I have more earnestly desired and intended, than to wait upon you, and though I am, I thank God, pretty well in Health within Doors, yet the sudden Change of Weather, the Frost, the Snow, and the cold North-wind, together with the Days short, and the Remembrance how my Distemper hath heretofore seized me anew, and in a violent Manner, even at *Chelsea* on such a Change, and my Friends strongly pressing me not to venture; I am forced to suppress my own Desires, and to deny myself.

And now I am at a Loss how to express my Mind to you.

When the Two Houses differ in Opinion, they reduce it to a Point, and then give their Reasons to each other in Writing; and 'till that is done, they think themselves not ripe for Conference; but having first exchanged Papers, then comes on the free Conference, which the Wisdom of our Nation deems irregular without it.

And

And I can't choose but think, That you may give me Hints and Heads of Arguments and Proofs, with less Expence of Time, than what you freely propose to spend with me.

And as I would not have you lose your Labour, so neither would I offer any Thing to disgust you, and do therefore hope I shall not. He that serves at the Altar, ought to partake of the Altar; but you are stript of your Benefits; and therefore, he that craves your Aid as a Minister of the Gospel, ought to consider you as such, and in the Circumstances you are.

I promise, That if you do vouchsafe to write, I will not trouble you with a Reply; but only prepare myself for a personal Conference, when, and so soon as it may be.

I was at *Chelsea* but once last Winter; and though I went well, as I thought, I was forc'd to sit up all Night, and return next Day with Difficulty.

20 Nov. 1721.

Your most Humble Servant,

W. STAUNTON.

LET.

P. S. My Waterman shall call upon you this Day Se'nnight, to know when he may wait on you for a Return of my Papers and Sermons last sent.

P. S. This Letter, notwithstanding the Date of it, was wrote on *Saturday-Night*; and after that, a sudden Change of Frost, into a cold Rain, gave me a Fit of the *Asthma*.



LETTER VII.

London, Nov. 23. 1721.

Honoured Sir,

I Heartily Thank you for your very kind and unexpected Present; but am sorry your Health will not permit you to meet me. I am very busy at present in Courses of Experiments; so I cannot be any considerable Time absent from *London*: Otherwise I would wait upon you at *Hampton* immediately, which I intend to do as soon as I am a little more disengaged. In the mean Time, I have ventur'd to send you Two

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* Books;

* Books; which when you have thoroughly perus'd, and thereby have used yourself to the Notions and Practices of the Apostolick Age, we shall be able to debate the Points you are concerned about, with more Satisfaction; Otherwise, we shall be at Cross-Purposes: And while you alone urge the Notions and Inferences of the 17th or 18th Century, and I alone of the 1st, 2d, 3d, or, at the most, of the 4th, we shall be *Barbarians* to each other. I have read your † Reply to Mr. Young, and think you have greatly the Advantage in that Dispute. I return you them both; And am, with great Sincerity,

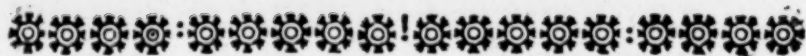
Your Obliged Humble Servant,

W. WHISTON.

* The Apostolical Constitutions, and Mr. Whiston's Comment upon St. John's Three Epistles.

† Intitled, Reason and Revelation.

L E T.



LETTER VIII.

Worthy Sir,

I Received your Books, and shall, in due Time, peruse them, not hastily, but considerately. Your Readiness to come down to *Hampton* is a particular surprizing Favour; but besides that I think it too much Trouble to you, so I also deem it Inconvenient upon other Accounts: But being well assured of your Readiness to serve me, I will, after the Perusal of your Books, and some time after *Christmas*, appoint a more convenient Time and Place of Conference.

St. Andrew,
1721.

Your most Humble Servant,

W. STAUNTON.

A Personal Conference was had the Beginning of *May*, 1722. at which Time, Mr. *Whiston* laid before me his Table of Creeds, and in Discourse with him, he informed me of his several Volumes of Primitive Christianity, and of divers other Books; all which I was desirous to have, and peruse, and he sent them to me accordingly.



LETTER IX.

I Thank you, Reverend Sir, for your Pains, and Labour, and Time spent with me at Chelsea, and I send Money for the Books. Upon opening of them, your Book intitled *The Origin of the Socinian and Athanasian Trinity*, the last Page, presented itself open to my View, which is *Origen's Testimony against the Athanasians directing their Prayers to Jesus Christ*, and is founded upon our Saviour's Commandment in St. John's Gospel, to pray to the Father in the Name of Christ, even the same Texts and expounded as it is mentioned and set forth by me in my *Sincere Thoughts*, Pag. 24, 25, 26. and in my *Packet of Letters*, Pag. 34. and on which I found my Question to Dr. W. Pag. 11, and 49. and again Pag. 73. Now, I pray, Sir, is not all this as strong a Testimony against others that so direct their Prayers, as against the *Athanasians*? It seems to me to be so, and that the Prayer in the 8th Book of the *Constitutions*, Chap. 7. is contrary to this Precept. Pray set me right herein, that I may proceed to a diligent

diligent Reading of the Books you sent,
without this Byass upon my Mind.

S I R,

Hampton Town
in Middlesex,
16 May, 1722.

Your most humble Servant,

W. STAUNTON.



LETTER X.

Cross-Street Hatton-Garden,
May 16. 1722.

Honoured Sir,

IN the same Books wherein *Origen* denies that *προσευχη*, which, he thinks, signifies the most Solemn Kind of Prayer (and not Prayer in General, or all Addresses by way of Petition) he allows of other Kinds of Prayer to the Son, and practises accordingly himself, as you may see Page 108. of my Paper, and as is evident in other Places of his Works, *Contra Celsum* Pag. 238, and 380, and 386. *De Orat.* Pag. 50. where he expressly declares, That we may return Thanks to Christ for Mercies received from him,

and put up our Petitions to him. So that Origen exactly agreed with the Constitutions, which always appropriate Solemn Prayer to the Father alone; and yet sometimes put up Petitions or give Thanks to the Son himself, which is evidently the Sense of the Antient Christians; as it is also of my Liturgy, which has turned the Litaney, which is Solemn Prayer, intirely to the Father.

I am, Sir,

Your Obliged Humble Servant,

WILL. WHISTON.

P.S. I thank you for your great Civilities at *Chelfea*, and for the Money you sent me for the Books.



L E T.



LETTER XI.

S I R,

YOur free and ready Answer to my Question is very acceptable. I do observe, that *Origen* admits of *Prayer* to the Son, but yet in an *improper* and *abusive* Acceptation of the Word. And do you think the *Practice* of the Antient Christians can in *any manner* suspend the *Precepts* of the Gospel? The New Form of Prayer instituted by our Saviour, *is not, Ask Me, but, Ask my Father* in my Name, and he will Give.

Your Humble Servant,

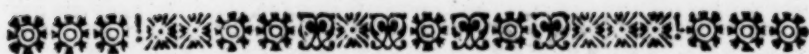
18 May, 1722.

WM. STAUNTON.

P. S. *Origen* exactly agreed with the Constitutions; but they do not exactly agree with the Commandments of God, (by *Moses* and by Christ) nor with your Sentiments of this Matter; for they teach most solemn Prayer to the Son; which, both you and they say, is always appropriate to the *Father* alone.

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LET.



LETTER XII.

FAVOUR me, Good Sir, with your Harmony of the Evangelists, and with your several Replies to Dr. *Alix*, wherein, I suppose, I shall find a remarkable Preface, mentioned by you to the *Διδαχὴ Ἀποστόλων*, which is an Abstract, as I apprehend, of the first Six Books of the Constitutions, and which I would also see; for, upon reading your internal Evidences of the Constitutions, they are very surprizing. O! that I were a Scholar! I will, however, by the Grace of God, do my best Endeavour to understand them; Time, and Pains, and Prayer shall not be wanting. My Misfortune is, That I come not to *London* so as to have Opportunity now and then to ask you a Question or Two, *Vivâ voce*, nor is it reasonable to engage your Pen herein.

I am,

4 Jan. 1722.

Reverend Sir,

Your much obliged Servant,

W^M. STAUNTON.

P. S.

P. S. The Water-Man will lay down Money for the Books, and will call for them as you shall appoint him. My Postscript to my former Letter may possibly seem rude and unmannerly; but it is intended only argumentative: You may be pleased to answer it, and chastise me for it, now or at any other Time as you shall have Leisure. It is a Bone in my Way.



LETTER XIII.

Reverend and Worthy Sir,

I Have, with Application of Mind, read over the Books you laid before me, and with continued Prayers to God for a right Judgment, and with an open and free Mind willing to embrace the Truth, maugre the Byas of Pre-engagements. And, upon the Whole, it seems to me, that the Evidences of former Ages bear hard upon the *Athanasians*; yet am I not convinced, that the *Arians* and *Eusebians* are

are exactly right ; they are not altogether Scriptural : But I consent entirely to what you call the Original Creed, and to our Baptismal Creed as a Brief of it, and as consistent with Christ's being the First-born of Creatures, in and by whom all others were made ; and I am persuaded to apply those Words of *Solomon* to our Saviour, " The Beginning of God's " Ways for his Works." Yet I apprehend, That the Sense of those Words hath been generally mistaken, or not rightly understood ; but hath lain hidden, and in the Dark, as did those Words of being baptized for the Dead," whereof you have lately conceived a plain and easy Interpretation, as, I think, I have now done, of the Words first cited. I have also distinguished in other Matters, and have presumed to make some Alterations in and to work up your 23 Propositions, into Form and Words according to my own present Mind and Apprehensions, assigning Reasons at the End of each Article for my presumptuous Dissent from you, wherein yet, I think, I have either Reason or Scripture, or both, in Favour of my Thoughts ; which I shall, with your good leave, lay before you, humbly asking, That you will take the same into Serious and Unbyassed Consideration, and, with all Freedom, impart your Mind and Thoughts

Thoughts thereupon. But I send it not herewith, because I heard some time since, that you were engaged in a Voyage to Sea, in Proof of the Longitude; wherein I wish you good Success, and ask the Favour of a Line from you, if you be at Home.

Your most Obliged Servant,

Hampton, July
19. 1722.

W. STAUNTON.



LETTER XIV.

London, July 23. 1722.

Honoured Sir,

AS soon as I came from *Gravesend*, I received yours of the 19th Instant. I am highly pleased, that the Books I recommended to you have given you any Degree of Light and Satisfaction, and shall be very well pleased to receive your Observations and Corrections of my 23 Propositions,

positions, and very *impartially* consider them. I intend also, to *write* the Result of my Consideration upon them once: provided you will not expect any future Rejoinders in a Verbal Conference, if it please God to bring us together again. I am not sure but I shall go out of Town this Day Sevensnight, so the sooner you send your Papers the better. I pray God direct us into all useful and necessary Truths; and am,

S I R,

Tours, with great Sincerity,

WILL. WHISTON.



LETTER XV.

Good Sir,

I Received your obliging Letter, and do here send my Thoughts, such as they are, upon your 23 Propositions, and have left each other Side Blank, whereby you may write your Thoughts thereupon
in

in as short a Method as you please ; nor shall I presume to give you any Second Trouble, but by Personal Conference, if there shall be Occasion. I shall also acknowledge your Trouble herein, and your great Favour to,

S I R,

25 July,
1722.

Your Unworthy Servant,

W^M. STAUNTON.



LETTER XVI.

London, July 28. 1722.

S I R,

I Have read over your Papers more than once, and am greatly surprized at the Contents of them, especially when I compare them with the Declaration in your former Letter, that “ you consent entirely “ to the Original or Constitution Creed,” which,

which, with me, is the most proper Apostolical Rule of Truth or Faith, or Catalogue of Fundamentals, now extant; and which if you had in earnest agreed to, all other Differences would have been of small Moment: While in reality you still keep your own weak and novel *Hypothesis*, derived partly from Mr. Nye, and partly from your Application of Mr. Norris's imaginary Ideal World: All which are as remote from giving any Evidence or Authentick Account what Christ and his Apostles delivered about the Trinity and Incarnation, as the *Cartesian* Philosophy, or the absurd Distinctions and *Hypotheses* of the Modern *Athanasians*. You confess, "That the Evidence of the former Ages, bears hard upon the *Athanasians*," and, I believe, you cannot now deny, that the same Sort of Evidence bears full as hard against your *Hypothesis*: To what Purpose, therefore, you have taken so much Pains about my Propositions, to reduce them to your own *Hypothesis*, and thereby, as you yourself cannot deny, to render them very unlike what they were intended for, I mean, a Faithful Historical Account of the Primitive Faith of Christians; I do not know: and I cannot but wonder, That such good Men as you, can satisfy yourselves in quibbling with and criticizing away the most obvious

obvious and natural Sense of Scripture, and of the Antient Creeds, because it will not suit with certain weak and novel Schemes and Hypotheses of your own: You see the Folly of this in Dr. *Waterland*, who yet has, great, later Authority on his Side; but cannot see it in your self, who have almost no Authority for you at all: Nor can you, I perceive, suppose, that the Apostolical and next Ages understood the *Old Testament* as well as your self. Sure, Sir, this is very like in Doctrines, to what in Practice, one should call Opposition to Christ and his Religion; A Declaration that we will not have Christ to reign over us: Nor, while I believe the Truth of that Religion, dare I once permit my self so openly to prevaricate therewith. I ask you in earnest, Whether you really believe, that ever any one Apostle, or Catholick Christian in all the past Ages, believed the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation according to your Interpretation of them? If so, pray give us the Evidence: If not, This is too like preaching to us another Gospel; and that greatly different from the Old in these Points, which, by the Law of Christ, is worthy of a Curse. Nor durst I venture upon any such Schemes against the most unquestionable Evidence of the Christian Revelation still extant, for any Consideration

ration whatsoever. You see I enter not into any Particulars, and you will easily discover in my Reply to the Lord *Nottingham*, why I do not: Nor, 'till you leave this vain and pernicious Way of Modern Hypotheses and Party Expositions, shall I desire to be any farther concerned. To deny the Divinity of our Saviour, with the Personality of the Holy Ghost, are Errors so gross and so prodigiously witnessed against in all the Original Records of Christianity, that I shall hear No-body against them 'till he can work Miracles; nay, Miracles greater than those of Christ and His Apostles, from whom the contrary Truths have most certainly been delivered to the Church. So I find I can be no farther serviceable to you in these Matters, and must, with Grief of Heart, take my Leave; and subscribe my self,

Your Affectionate,

but greatly Disappointed,

Friend and Servant,

WILL. WHISTON.

LET-



LETTER XVII.

I Add, Sir, to my former Considerations, Col. i. 18. That our Saviour was the Ἀρχὴ πρωτότοκος from the Dead, that he might be πρωτεύων, the First in all Things.

Your humble Disciple,

29 July, 1722.

W. STAUNTON.



LETTER XVIII.

Reverend Sir,

IN my First Letter to you, of the 29th of September, I observed, That the Question between you and my Lord
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Notting-

Nottingham was, What the Fathers thought and taught, *pro & contra*; and proposed a Suspension of their Opinions, and to have Recourse ourselves to the Scriptures; proposing also, That the Difficulties, both of the *Arians* and *Athanasians*, were, in some sort, removed by the Doctrines of Ideas and Pre-existence; and I was (*non obstante*) then, even in your Opinion, a good Christian, a thoughtful Reasoner, and a Religious Man; and I hope, by the Grace of God, I am so still. And though I think that the *Arians* are more Antient than the *Athanasians*, yet they may be in Error. And I, in Search of Truth, appeal from both of them to the Law and Dictates of Reason and Nature; and to the Commandments of God (whereby that Law was, in the main, reduced into Writing) and to the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (whereby it was compleated) whom I own to be my King, my only Mediator and Advocate, and I do sincerely believe, what you call the *Original Creed*; and endeavour to obey all God's Commandments. And in Answer to what you alledge, and I admit to have been the prevailing Opinions of many that lived in the 2d and 3d Centuries, and the latter End of the First, I plead the undoubted Evidence and Authority, and the

the more *primitive* Opinions and Doctrines of *Peter* and *Paul*, and of the *Evangelists*; and was in hopes, that you would have been particular in your Answer to me, and was overjoyed, that so Great a Man had so undertaken: But since you are now otherwise minded, I only desire you to remit my Review of your Propositions, humbly asking your Pardon for the Trouble I have given you. And am, Sir,

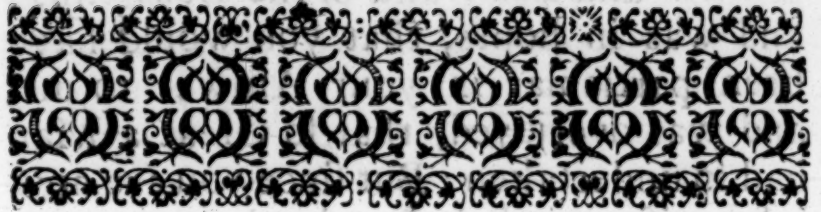
With great Respect and Deference,

ult. July,
1722.

Your most Humble Servant,

W. STAUNTON.





LETTER XIX.

MA Y it please you, Reverend Sir, to admit of a farther Answer to yours of *July* 28, That you and I, and every one that doth in Earnest agree to and believe the Constitution Creed, must be supposed to believe, that Jesus Christ is not God, or a God by Nature, but the First of Creatures, which are *St. Paul's* Words, *Col. i. 15.* and are in that Creed. The necessary and unavoidable Import and Consequence of which is, That the First-born of every Creature is a Creature. And I have advanced, that every visible Creature, whereof we have any Knowledge, is of an *Automatous* Nature, and so far in Part, the First of each is the Beginning of God's Ways for his Works, even as Jesus Christ was of the Whole, and who was also in like Manner the Beginning

ginning and First of the Resurrection, as well as of the Creation. And I have a Right, by Promise, to your impartial Thoughts thereupon, not byassed by the Opinions of former Ages, which may be justly said to bear hard upon the *Athanasians*, who rest their Cause thereupon; but I am supported by *St. Paul* himself, and by the Constitution-Creed founded upon him, upon his very Words.

As to the Personality of the Holy Spirit of God, there is nothing like it, either in *St. Peter's* Solemn and Primitive Account of it, *Acts ii.* or in the Prophetick Accounts of it. To be inspired and to be illuminated, is to be taught of God. And I take it, that the Law and the Gospel are the Primitive Records of Christianity, much more than the Fathers.

And as to Incarnation All agree, That the Person intended by *St. Paul* in the Words above cited, was incarnate. The *Athanasians* hold the Hypostatical Union, that very God was united with an human Soul. You have said enough to convince them that this was not the Doctrine of the Fathers, which, as such, they call Primitive; for you set up the *Eusebian Arians* as more primitive than their Fathers, and shew there was never any Thought among them of our Saviour's assuming an human Soul, but a Body only. Be

it so. Then You and They say, That He was a God by Nature, and took Flesh. Now if this be true, there never was a Man Christ Jesus; but I say and believe with *St. Paul*, that Jesus was the first of Creatures, and so do you also say and believe, and that this first of Creatures took Flesh upon him. I say so too, and I agree with you and with your primitive Fathers, that he did not assume an human Soul, for there was no need of it: His own Soul or Spirit incarnate was a Man, or like unto Man in all Things, Sin only excepted. And I dare, almost, challenge all Mankind to devise any other *Hypothesis* consistent with this Truth.

Thus, Sir, I am in good Earnest. Nor is this another Gospel. I pray God avert the Anathema you have almost denounced against me, and send us Peace and true Faith through Christ our Lord.

I beseech you, Sir, to resume your Promise of Writing your impartial Thoughts herein, though but in a Short Epistolary Way as I now write; for I can't express to you the Transport of Joy that I was in upon the Receipt of that promissory Letter, and was afterwards proportionably flatted and disappointed.

But above all, I beseech you so far to think with *Dr. Waterland*, as to believe, that I speak with great Sincerity, without

out any Intentions of either Quibbling or Criticising away the obvious and natural Sense of Scripture, and would most willingly be informed what Texts they be that are imagined to be so used by me. I would not be guilty of it for the World.

And though I do, with great Reason, and a just and humble Sense of my want of Parts and Learning, prefer most Mens Understanding to mine own, yet I must be saved by mine own Faith, and I would know and understand what I believe, and why. And these humble Thoughts put me upon these Enquiries; and I choose to advise with Men of the best Learning and Judgment; and I know no Man in the World that I think better qualified to instruct than yourself.

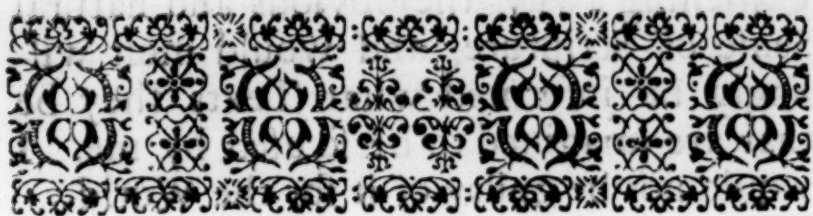
I am,

Hampton Town,
4 Aug. 1722.

Worthy Sir,

Your Unworthy Servant,

W. STAUNTON.



LETTER XX.

*Lyndon, in Rutland-shire,
Aug. 7. 1722.*

S I R,

I Received all your Three Letters, and I am sorry that I did not return your Papers again before I came down; which you shall, however, have as soon as I come to *London*. I also am greatly concerned, that I cannot be at all serviceable to you in your Enquiries about the Trinity any farther: I have laid that antient Evidence before you, which has intirely fatisfied me, what the Apostles and their Companions delivered concerning that Faith and Worship; which Evidence you confess to be Authentick, and to be derived from, at least, the latter End of the First Century. You might, with equal Truth, have affirmed the same of the intire Latter Half of that Century, in
which

which all the Books of the New Testament are written. And if you think that I shall enter into a Debate with you about your new *Hypothesis* of Christ's being the Father of all Souls, as *Adam* is supposed to be the Father of our Bodies ; or about Mr. *Norris*'s Ideal World ; or Mr. *Nye*'s Notions of the Trinity, I must desire to be excused, as not at all dealing in such imaginary Schemes, invented generally to colour over vain Opinions and Novel Errors, which would otherwise appear directly contrary to the Christian Revelation. Nor do you, Sir, at all think of the sad Consequence of such Sort of presumptuous Reasonings, which have hitherto prodigiously corrupted the Christian Religion : And now some sober and honest Attempts are made for its Restitution to its primitive Simplicity and Integrity ; and that, in several Instances, with great Hopes of Success, is it by any Method in so much Danger of miscarrying, as by this, which you, and so many others go into ? Which is indeed a sore Trouble to me. This Unhappy Consequence, were it possible to repent of having done my Duty to God and my Blessed Saviour in Points of so great Consequence, would almost tempt me to be sorry for having given any Handle to such pernicious Procedure, by discovering the Gross Mistakes of all
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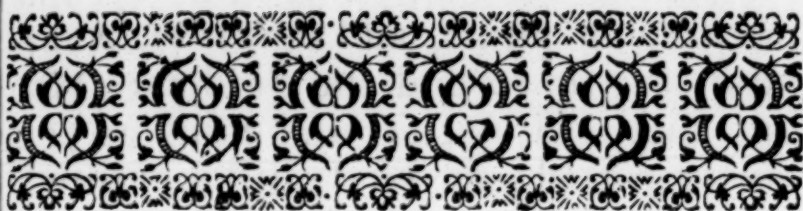
the Modern Ages in such Matters. Nor are there, I believe, wanting Learned and Wise Men, who, in great Measure, see the Errors I and others have laid open, but dare not venture to declare their Mind in Publick, in order to their Correction, out of *Fear of such pernicious Consequences*. I therefore beg of you, by all the Regards you have to our Common Lord and Saviour, that you consider better of this Procedure of yours before you go on any farther. But if you will venture on, and publish your last Paper, I insist upon it, that you also publish these my Letters, that the World may see how earnestly I have opposed such pernicious Methods of Delusion. I pass no Censure on you or any Man, as to your Salvation: *To your own Master you must stand or fall*; but as to your's, or Dr. Waterland's, or the Socinians, I may add, or Dr. South's, or Dr. Sherlock's, or even Dr. Clarke's Hypotheses; so far as they are contradicted or unsupported by the Original Records of Christianity, I ever have, and, I believe, ever shall bear my open Testimony against them.

I am, Sir,

Your sincere Friend and Servant,

W. WHISTON.

LET-



LETTER XXI.

Reverend Sir,

IF you shall be pleased to distinguish between *Reason* and *Delusion*, and to call to mind, that *Reason* is the *Voice* of God, and the *Test* of Revelation, *excepting* as to Matters of Fact, as more fully appears by my *Treatise* thereupon: And shall add *Thinking* to your Book-learning, and give yourself leave, with calm, and serious, and sincere Thoughts, to read my last Letter over again, particularly that Part of it which relates to *Incarnation*; you may possibly find very good Reasons to omit me out of the Number
of

of those against whose *Errors* you do and have, with great *Sincerity* and *Magnanimity*, borne your *Publick* Testimony, and may, if you please, add in my *Place* and *Stead*, the *Arians* and the *Eusebians*: Not that they did not say and think as you have reported; for I take it for granted, that you are a faithful *Historian*, nor am I qualified to dispute that with you; But that their *Thoughts* are, in some Points, *contrary* to Reason, which I have advanced against them, and which is, as I think, agreeable with the *Sacred Scriptures* generally received amongst us, though it may be not with what you call the *Apostolical Constitutions*, and which you prefer to, and do, rashly it may be, affirm to be *superiour* in Authority to their *known* Gospels and Epistles; and yet even they will admit of the Question, In what Sense Jesus is to be called God? They no where say, as I remember, that he is God by *Nature*; or, if they do, I humbly conceive, they are *inconsistent* with themselves. Our *Saviour* himself always preached *Reason*, and lowered himself to the Understanding of his *meanest* Auditors, and allowed of their Reasoning; as when He argued with the *Syrophænician* Woman, “ That he was not to give the Childrens “ Bread unto Dogs. Truth, Lord, “ said

“ said she; but yet the Dogs may eat of
 “ the Crumbs that fall from the Childrens
 “ Table.” Thus was this poor Woman
 admitted to *argue* with our Great Lord
 and Master. She confessed what he said,
 and avoided it, and the Master *allowed*
 her Reasonings. Think of this, Sir, I
 pray, and call to mind, how St. Paul *rea-*
soned with *Fælix*, and that *Fælix* trembled,
 and adjourned, or rather *waved* the De-
 bate; as you do; and that St. Paul had
 almost *persuaded* King *Agrippa* to be a
 Christian. Now there is a Part of your
 Letter which seems something like this,
 when, in want, I suppose, of a reasonable
 and ready Answer to my closer Reason-
 ings, upon the *Incarnation* especially,
 you are almost persuaded to *repent* your
 having produced your Evidence against
 the *Athanasians*; and, at the same Time,
 as if you were contending for Victory,
 not for Truth, you seem *unwilling*, as *Fæ-*
lix, even to hear him that offers you the
 united and undoubted *Testimony* of *Reason*
 and *Scripture* against the *Arians* and *Euse-*
bians. Lord! what is Man?

I shall also take Leave to say, That
Origen's Testimony, de Orat. (founded upon
John the 16th) which you call an *Original*
Testimony against the *Athanasian Wor-*
ship,

ship, is it self *as full* and *plain* a Testimony against the *Arian* and *Eusebian* Worship; and you can see this with one Eye, and not with the other. But whenever Dr. *Waterland* shall spy this out, and have Courage to shew you this *same* Original Testimony, you are bound by *Promise* to turn *Athanasian* immediately; which will be an Argument against the Printing of this our Conference: But yet, I think, you need not much fear him; for he may be apt to consider, that it is a Two-edged Sword, and cuts *you both* down.

I don't seek to engage you in Mr. *Norris's* Notions: He was a Great Man, and needs no Second; nor as to the Philosophical Trinity; Let that alone, Reason will sufficiently support me therein: and I am in no Doubt about it, nor is it an immediate *Matter* or *Condition* of Salvation, yet tending much to the Glory of God, and the great Enlargement of our Mind and Thought. But, I think it a *Distinction* worthy of your Notice, That although our Saviour be called in Scripture, *Λόγος Θεός*, and by you, Created Wisdom, yet the *internal* Wisdom in God is *Λόγος Θεός*, Uncreated. I add this Single Word, that if, in earnest Dispute, I have said any thing too positively, and
not

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not becoming a *Disciple*, I hope your Goodness will make Allowances for it; for I do acknowledge myself, with great Sincerity, to be,

S I R,

18 *August*,
1722.

Your much Obliged

Humble Servant,

W. STAUNTON.



POST-





POSTSCRIPT.



IT has frequently been objected to *me*, to this effect, That *Private Reasoning* is not deemed so safe a Rule to go by. as is the *General Sense and Judgment of others*; particularly the Learned *Fathers of the Church*, and which have been received for many Ages by most Men, by Men of great Sincerity and great Wisdom; And that, therefore, it is the safest and discreetest Way, for a Modest and Humble Man, to *submit to*, and *acquiesce* in their *Determinations*; not leaning to his *own Understanding*: And that

G

this

7 this is what he can best answer to God and his *own Conscience*, even though it prove erroneous. But, I think, they that have Leisure and Inclination to examine Matters themselves, are always excepted out of this Safe and Discreet Way; But then they must be cautious of contradicting our Fore-Fathers, and rather willing to suspect their own Judgments.

Now, I do confess, that I am rather inclined to see with my own Eyes, than with other Mens, though much more learned than myself; and though they should have * *the Gift of Tongues*, and may possibly speak great and mysterious Truths, well known to God and themselves, yet, if I understand them not, it doth not Edify nor Affect me; and if they do not humble themselves to speak, to my Understanding, Words plain and easy to be understood, it cannot reasonably be expected, that I should say *Amen* to what I do not understand; That I should assent to any Thing that is not clear and evident to me. What am I then to do? It is said, I am to suspect my own Judg-

ment. No, say I; for when a Matter is not clear and evident to me, I am to make *no Judgment* about it; I am only to *suspend* my Judgment of Assent, as having *no Foundation* to build upon; and hereby I shall be sure, that I am *not guilty of Error*. And this seems to me, to be the *more* Safe and Discreet Way, than to say *Amen* to the Determinations of others, be they ever so Wise and Learned, and their Opinions of ever so antient a Date. And, I think, I cannot answer it, either to God or my own Conscience, to give my Judgment of Assent to any thing relating to my eternal Salvation, that, for aught appears to me, may be either True or False; or may at length prove Erroneous; because Error is a Sin, for which a Man is accountable, as for a rash and hasty Judgment of Assent, to what is not manifest to him: *De non apparentibus, & non existentibus, eadem est Ratio*. And if a Man, thus judging or assenting, be in the Right, he is so by Chance, and, I humbly conceive, as guilty of Error as if he were in the Wrong: But if Judgment be *not formed*, but only *suspended*, it will *not amount* to a Contradiction of other Mens Opinions; *nothing* being asserted Dogmatically. Yet *Reasons* may and must be assigned, even

by those that are Humble and Modest, for the Suspension of their Judgment; but here will be no Room for them to suspect their own Judgments, which are not formed, but only suspended: For instead of giving of Judgment, and of leaning to a Man's own Understanding, he plainly and ingenuously confesses his own Ignorance; and says, I don't know: Which I suppose to be the true *Moral* of *De La Motte's Fable*, "† Wherein the *Clock* insults the *Sun-Dial*, demanding of him the Hour of the Day? But the *Sun* not shining out, *eo Instante*, the *Dial*, with great Truth and Modesty, answered, "I cannot tell, and then the *Clock* struck Four; and at that Instant, the *Sun* broke out, from under a Cloud, and shewed it to be *Four* and *Three Quarters*: You see, Sir, says the *Dial*, those that rely upon you may be mistaken: But my Custom is, That if I do not see very clearly, I always say, I do not know." — And so do I (always suspending my Judgment) in all *Matters* of Moment, that are not plain and clear to me by the Light, either of *Reason* or

† See *Court Fables*. p. 223.

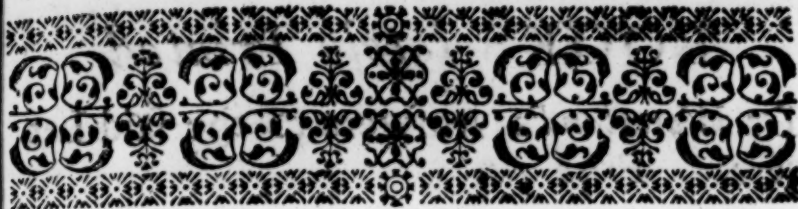
Revelation. I will say, Even as clear as the *Sun* at Noon-Day; as knowing no other way of avoiding Error, which is *always sinful*, being, as I think, *never sincere*. But I hereby confess my *Ignorance*, not as a Crime; for it is not so: It is rather a Misfortune. And this, surely, is very consistent with Humility and Modesty, and is a full Answer to the above-written Objection, which hath been several Times made to me, to the Effect above-written, but in other Words: And, therefore, to give the Objection its full Force, I have borrowed most of the Words from Dr. *Waterland*, out of his Defence of his 29th Query: And what I have applied in Answer to it, about suspending Assent where there is no sufficient Evidence, seems to be approved by him in his First Letter to me. Therefore, whatever I advance, is only with a *Sic videtur, vel non*, and I have guarded all, in the Title-Page, by a *Nihil temere assero*: and my whole Design is, To find out Truth, duly searching for her as for hidden Treasure; with the same, yea, even with greater Diligence and Application, and with an open and free Mind; always resolving not to be sinfully tenacious, but to embrace her with all my Soul, whenever she offers her-

herself to my Understanding. Always endeavouring rightly to distinguish her from * OPINION, the *Base-born Child of Ignorance*, although it be too frequently miscalled, TRUTH, by *Pride and Laziness*.

* See *Court Fables*, ut supra. p. 287. *These Fables are excellently Translated from the French by Mr. Samber, and Printed for Mr. Curll in the Strand.*

F I N I S.





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